

April Meeting

Friday, April 20

7:30 pm

*Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
1035 Carol Lane
Lafayette, CA*

Program: *Kristen McIntyre, K6WX*, will speak on Propagation Physics (see page 5 for abstract).

V.E. Testing

Prior to the meeting from 6-7 PM.

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Public Service Opportunities

Pete Harris, KE6ZIW

MDARC Public Service Coordinator

Hi all! We are approaching that exciting time of year when amateur radio communications for public service events begin. Last year members of the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club provided safety and emergency radio communications for 12 events, with approximately 50 of our members participating at least once during the year. The types of events are varied, with

President's QRM

by Marty Heyman, W6MDH



March has been my month to go traveling. I took the usual radio along and had the usual fun finding repeaters and chatting with the locals. It's amazing how much fun you can get from a little HT! I now have repeaters programmed into memory for all the grandkids houses and even a couple in South Texas where the folks winter. I got more use from those repeaters than ours this month.

Public Service Event season is getting into high gear. Please consider supporting some of the great events coming up. It is our best advertisement and


something to appeal to almost any ham operator.

All you need to take part in most of these events is a hand-held ham radio, an extra battery, some common sense and the ability to get your adrenaline flowing by working with a radio team to help coordinate and ensure safety for an event involving hundreds or thousands of people.


You frequently go to beautiful places and settings, you get to learn how to use your radio equipment and its various capabilities in real-life situations, and you take part in the challenge of figuring out "on-the-fly" communications strategies

demonstration of the value of Amateur Radio. It's fun, too.

I want to thank the team for running the March meeting in my absence. I was between meetings, travel from Philadelphia to the Boston area by way of Brewster, New York, in a snowstorm that dumped a foot and a half of wet snow on us. Fortunately, I was traveling by train and missed the fun of sitting stopped on the freeway for hours in the snow. I sat, waiting for my host, listening to the local repeater traffic complain about the roads and nibbling on a sandwich in a warm restaurant.

It's good to be back and I'm looking forward to some trips up both Mount Diablo and Vollmer Peak as we continue working on our equipment. Hope you all have fun radio-related plans as well. 

as you face real-world obstacles. Once in a while you get the additional thrill of coordinating rescue efforts for someone in trouble, or uniting a parent with a lost child, or providing information to a worried friend or relative about the status of a participant in the event.

The events that are currently scheduled for 2007 are listed on page 4. There will be some additional events later in the year. Sign up now, while there are slots available. You can sign up for an event at MDARC meetings, or by contacting Pete Harris at 925-228-4503, or pharris125@comcast.net. 

Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club W6CX

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The Carrier is a monthly publication of the Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club (MDARC). It is the policy of the editor to publish all material submitted by the membership provided such material is in good taste, relevant to amateur radio and of interest to MDARC members, and space is available. All material must be submitted to the editor by the last day of the month prior to publication. Material is accepted on a first-in, first-out basis. Articles and other material may be submitted via Internet email to carrier@mdarc.org or delivered to the editor at the address listed in the club roster. Material will be accepted in plain ASCII or rich text format (RTF). Material may also be submitted as hardcopy.

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MDARC Club Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2007

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette, CA

The meeting was opened at 7:40 pm by Acting President Trevor Hall followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes from the previous General Meeting were approved as published in the Carrier.

The Treasurer, Don Anthony, reported that the balance in the Treasury is \$53,700.

The VE testing for the evening included 18 upgrades and new hams. There were 3 "paper upgrades" for those hams that no longer needed the Morse Code to satisfy their General License requirements.

A class in going to be offered starting on April 3 at the Salvation Army Church for Hams wishing to gain their Extra Class license. The only cost for the students is the cost of the study material at \$17.00.


It was announced for those interested

parties that the quarterly N.A.R.C meeting will take place on April 21.

Trevor indicated that the Mt. Diablo Park officials had been in contact with the club and offered the use of the site at the top of the mountain again. A motion was made, seconded and approved to hold the 2007 Field Day on Mt. Diablo.

A number of public service events are planned where hams can help the community. [Ed: See page 4 for a list of events.]

RACES training was announced for tomorrow, March 17.

Business meeting closed at 8:05 pm and was followed by an outstanding program by Chris Suter on the Danville Fire Com-Van. 


Dick Brown, KT6X
Acting Secretary

Editor's Exciter


by Jeremiah R. Blasi, K6BQ

As you can see by the focus of this month's Carrier, the public service season is upon us. The first reason for the existence of the Amateur Radio Service that the FCC lists in Part 97 is *recognition and enhancement of the value of the amateur service to the public as a voluntary noncommercial communication service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications.*

While providing public service is not all of what we do, it is a big part. Public service does much to inform the public about amateur radio and our capabilities. I was recently reading an article about the services that one club provides to the public, and the comment was made that the event's sponsors provided much of the SAG service for the event, hams were required for the checkpoints because cell phone coverage was spotty at best in those areas.

So get out there and help improve—or create—the public image of amateur radio this year. I hope you will take advantage of the many opportunities offered this year! 

SFARC/MDARC Campout

The 38th annual campout will take place starting on Friday, June 1st and end on Sunday, June 3rd at the Sugar Pine Dam Recreation Area. It is one of the most beautiful spots in Placer County. This will be a joint venture between the Club and another group of radio amateurs who have meeting for this annual event for the last 30 years. We are limited to 50 people at this site so get your reservations in early. The cost is \$35 per family. For more information, see <http://www.sfarc.org/camp2007.htm>. 

Alcatraz Challenge Communications

Members of the MDARC provide radio communications for this thrilling event . . . and Net-Control Was on Coit Tower!

By Pete Harris, KE6ZIW

Imagine one of the most spectacular settings in the world for a ham radio public service event, and the absolute dream position for the radio team's net-control. How about the San Francisco Waterfront and Bay, Alcatraz, the Fireboat station at the foot of the Bay Bridge, the Ferry Building, the Embarcadero, Aquatic Park—and for net-control—the base of Coit Tower on top of Telegraph Hill. This was the beautiful setting for the San Francisco Alcatraz Challenge Biathlon.

. . . the magic of radio transmissions . . .

On, July 10, members of the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club provided radio communications for this yearly swim and run. Several hundred athletes jumped into the cold waters of San Francisco Bay off a Red & White Ferry next to Alcatraz Island, swam 2.4 miles to the Fireboat station at the foot of the Bay Bridge, then proceeded to run 10 kilometers down the San Francisco waterfront to Aquatic Park.

Hams were stationed on the Red & White Ferry, on kayaks that were interspersed among the swimmers, on the lead powerboat, on the powered Zodiac raft at the rear of the swimmers, on the barge that was the swim's finish line, at the Fireboat station, on shore shadowing the event's coordinator, on a bike that followed the runners, at the run's finish line in Aquatic Park, and—of course—on top of Telegraph Hill at Coit Tower.

The event officially began when the ham on the Red & White's top deck, standing next to the captain, received the radioed start command relayed through net control from the ham standing next to

the event coordinator on shore. The start command was given to the captain, who immediately blew the loud ferryboat horn, signaling the swimmers to jump off the ferry into the Bay. That began an almost constant flow of radio communications between members of the ham radio team regarding the status of the swimmers and the positioning of the various vessels that were keeping track of the swimmers to ensure their safety.

This event was conducted as a closed net, with almost all communication being relayed through net-control. This was necessary due to the large number of hams sharing the frequency, geographic and structural obstacles, and the distances between radio operators and their reliance on lower power hand-held radios. All stations had line-of-sight contact with Telegraph Hill (and what a sight it was), but many could not communicate directly with each other. Signals from "The Hill" boomed down to all of us. At the direction of net-control, there was at times some station-to-station communication between vessels in the water. A simplex two-meter frequency was being used because there was no repeater that was within constant range of all the team members.

. . . the camaraderie of being on a radio team . . .

Every once in a while there was a break in the radio action and hams on the Bay could enjoy the incredible scenic backdrop to this event. There, from an angle that most of us rarely get to see—water level on the Bay—rose the world famous San Francisco skyline, with its well known buildings, hills, and other landmarks.

As the swimmers splashed in the water and gulped for air, the Pyramid Building, the Ferry Building, the seven famous hills,




the Bay Bridge, Pier 39, and Fisherman's Warf looked larger than life against the dark blue sky dotted with patches of fog.

Two of the swimmers needed to be pulled out of the water early into the event when they became too cold and exhausted. This process was coordinated from shore through radioed messages relayed via net-control to hams that were on the various boats. Several

other swimmers lagged behind the main group and appeared to be struggling long after the front runners had reached shore. Event volunteers and hams in boats stayed close by in case they got into immediate trouble, gave them encouragement, and let them know how much further they had to go. This was being communicated to the event coordinator. These swimmers were all able to reach the finish line.

. . . the chance to do something meaningful . . .

When the event was over by around noon, medals were given out in various categories. There was food and refreshments and great "Alcatraz Challenge" t-shirts for all participants. We were on an emotional high, trading stories about the day's events.

Participating in radio communications for public service events is a thrilling experience for many different reasons. The magic of radio transmissions, the camaraderie of being on a radio team, the chance to do something meaningful for a good cause, the fun and satisfaction of using your radio equipment and opportunity to learn its various capabilities in real-life situations, the beautiful places and settings that you get to enjoy—these are some of the reasons why it's easy as an amateur radio operator to get hooked on taking part in public service events. 

2007 Radio Communication Events

Pete Harris, KE6ZIW

MDARC Public Service Coordinator

MS Walk

Heather Farms Park, Walnut Creek

April 22, 2007

Radio Coordinator: *Eoin O'Donoghue*

March of Dimes WalkAmerica

Heather Farms Park, Walnut Creek

April 28, 2007

Radio Coordinator: *Janice Fujii*

Concord Mt. Diablo Trail Ride

Mt. Diablo, 4WD vehicles welcome

May 5, 2007

Radio Coordinator: *John Stuart*

Devil Mountain Run

Danville

May 6, 2007

Radio Coordinator: *Ed Ritchie*

Escape from Alcatraz Swim and Triathlon

San Francisco Waterfront and Bay

June 3, 2007

Radio Coordinator: *Barry Bettman*

4th of July Parade

Downtown Pleasant Hill

July 4, 2007

Radio Coordinator: *Pete Harris*

Alcatraz Challenge Swim

San Francisco Waterfront and Bay

August 5, 2007

Radio Coordinator: ____

MDARC Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 5, 2007

Fudruckers, 1940 N. Main St., Walnut Creek

President Marty Heyman W6MDH, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Other Board Members present: Vice-President Sheldon Lawrence, KI6ATA; Secretary Paul Dickey, N6JOX; Treasurer Don Anthony, N6SIA; Jason Legate, W6SN; Trevor Raty, KG6MDW; Trevor Hall, WA6JAU; and Emergency Coordinator Bob Green, K6GD. Chairmen & other members present: Membership, Christina Johnson KF6UXC; Dave Gordon, N6SWE.

Marty advised the Board that another member of the Board of Directors was required (because of Don Anthony's move to Treasurer) for the balance of Don's term this year.

Dave Gordon was nominated. The Board approved the appointment to be made in accordance with the Club By-laws.

Treasurer Don Anthony reported a balance of \$53,444.07, total of accounts, including five CDs. The Board approved a transfer of funds from a CD to the operating checking account to pay anticipated expenses.

The minutes of the Feb. 5 meeting were APPROVED as printed in the Carrier. (There was no business because of a lack of a quorum.)

Committee Reports:

Technical: Trevor Hall reported that the

Committee discussed the following:


- need for control operators' contacts on the website
- programming instructions for the TNC
- CX-3 site down (Trevor Raty to check)
- assessment of pending coordinations (Trevor R to check)
- Trevor Hall is now the MDARC Club NARCC Coordinator
- 440 machine now re-coordinated, also ATV
- placement of router on the hill—to go in metal cabinet
- shared responsibility of cabinets on the hill

Membership: Christina reported 28 new members. Christina will ensure the

last names are forwarded to Jim Brunk N6BHX for the directory.

EC: Bob Green reviewed Field Day requirements. Apparently both the Delta and Mt. Diablo are available. John NN6E has offered to make reservations for the fairgrounds, and Trevor Hall offered to make reservations on the hill. A survey will be conducted at the next general meeting to determine interest in either or both sites.

Trevor Hall reminded the Board that an Extra class is due to start April 3, in Concord on Tuesday evenings, using the Salvation Army facility.

Marty adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m. 

*Respectfully submitted,
Paul Dickey, N6JOX, Secretary*

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April MDARC Meeting Program

Abstract: Propagation Physics (given at Pacificon)

As amateur radio operators we experience propagation of RF energy first hand. At times this propagation may seem mysterious and strange, however, it can be modeled by our current physical understanding of electromagnetics. This allows us to make some predictions about how propagation will unfold. Our understanding falters when RF energy propagates in environments that are far too complex to contain within the best models we can build. This is when the mystery returns.

This talk will explore our physical understanding of propagation, what factors govern it, and how it interacts with the environment and ionosphere. Using this understanding, amateur radio operators can make better choices for more efficient RF propagation.

Speaker Bio:

Kristen McIntyre, K6WX, has been interested in radio since she was about 5 years old. She started in Amateur Radio in 1979 getting her ticket while at MIT.

Kristen has worked in many diverse areas from analog circuit design to image processing to starting and running an ISP. She is currently working as a principal investigator at Sun Microsystems Laboratories where she is researching robustness and emergent properties of large distributed computer systems. She is a long time denizen of Silicon Valley and has worked at or consulted for many of the usual suspects.

Kristen is an active ham and loves to chase DX on HF with her Elecraft K2 which she built while visiting her mother in Florida. She is an ARRL Technical Coordinator for the East Bay Section and is active in many local clubs.

EMCOMM West 2007

"The Biggest Little Ham Convention in the World"

EMCOMMWEST 2007 is coming, May 4-6 in Reno, NV. The Keynote speaker will be Allen Pitts, W1AGP, ARRL Media & PR Manager.

The event will feature a huge swap meet on Saturday morning, and a banquet on Saturday evening, topped off with an ARRL Forum on Sunday. For more information, and the program schedule of forums and events, please check the website at: www.emcommwest.org. Registration forms and a link to the Atlantis Hotel to book rooms can be found there. For questions, email info@emcommwest.org.



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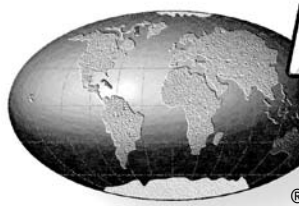
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MDARC Club Net

Thursday 8:00 pm

General ATV Net

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Thursday, 7:00 pm

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East County 146.535 Simplex
Drew Hanson, KD6GLY

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Ed Ritchie, K6SFD

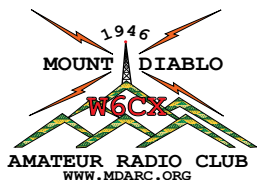
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Steve Adams, KF6WNH

April Events

April 20 7:30 pm **MDARC Monthly Meeting**
Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Lafayette

April 28 **April Carrier Deadline**

May 7 7:00 pm **MDARC Board Meeting**
Fuddrucker's, 1940 N. Main St., Walnut Creek



The Carrier

Newsletter of the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club

P.O. Box 23222

Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

www.mdarc.org



Next meeting: April 20—Propagation with Kristen McIntyre, K6WX
